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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4004  
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNMEN/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 1377  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3354  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 3561

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIRUT 000066

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/FO; NEA/ELA FOR NEWHOUSE, IRWIN; PM/FO  
ALSO FOR IO A/S HOOK, PDAS WARLICK  
P FOR DRUSSELL, RRANGASWAMY  
USUN FOR KHALILIZAD, WOLFF, SCHEDELBAUER  
NSC FOR ABRAMS, RAMCHAND, YERGER, MCDERMOTT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/15/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IR](#) [LE](#)

SUBJECT: LEBANON: URGING GOL ACTION TO STEM UNSCR 1701  
VIOLATIONS

REF: A. STATE 3953

[1](#)B. BEIRUT 60

Classified By: CDA William Grant for reasons 1.5 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (U) Action request: see para 7

[1](#)2. (C) Per instructions in reftel, Charge and other emboffs on January 15 conveyed to senior GOL and political officials points about the risks of continued rocket attacks directed at Israel from Lebanese territory. Charge spoke to senior aides to the President and PM as well as to FinMin Mohamed Chatah, Minister of State Nassib Lahoud and the senior aide to majority leader Saad Hariri, who is abroad. He urged that the government spokesman issue a statement condemning the attacks following the cabinet meeting scheduled for 1800 that same day. PolEcon Chief conveyed the points to political advisors of the Progressive Socialist Party (Jumblatt) and Lebanese Forces (Geagea), who promised to urge Ministers from their parties to support such a cabinet statement.

[1](#)3. (C) PM Fouad Siniora reacted that this was a "serious message" and sent it to the President, PM aide Roula Nouredine told us. Charge has appointment request to see Siniora on January 16. On the question of a new statement, Siniora's view is that there is no change from GOL position previously articulated, Nouredine said, indicating that there might not be such a statement given there is no change in the GOL's position.

[1](#)4. (SBU) FinMin Chatah, formerly the senior aide to Siniora, argued that the fact there have been rocket attacks underlined the need for more, not less, USG assistance to the LAF. The focus should be on the "real issue" of addressing the GOL's lack of complete control over Lebanese territory, he said. Other interlocutors said they understood the points well but had no extensive reaction.

[1](#)5. (C) On January 14, the day of the second attack, GOL Information Minister Mitri made a statement to the press condemning it (ref B). Other statements to the media after the second attack by both opposition and majority political leaders, as well as the LAF, rejected the use of Lebanese territory for attacks against Israel.

FM Salloukh: "There is no Lebanese political support for the

rockets being fired or the rockets that are being discovered in the south." Lebanon "denounces and rejects" such acts that "are not in its interests." The attacks "do not serve the goals of consolidating stability in southern Lebanon through the close cooperation between the Lebanese Army and UNIFIL and forcing Israel to fully abide by the articles of Resolution 1701."

LAF Commander Jean Kahwagi: Lebanon is "completely committed to the international resolutions and calls for observing all its articles and implementing them by everybody." Lebanon will continue to "fully cooperate with UNIFIL." He noted that the LAF stepped up their defensive measures in cooperation with the UNIFIL forces and ran patrols to make sure the citizens are fine and to assure the citizens about their safety.

Hizballah Minister of Labor Mohamad Fneish: "The cabinet's position was clear and has not changed, and our stand is similar to that of the cabinet." Fneish also denied Hizballah involvement in the attacks and said the party did not know the identity of the rocket launchers, saying, "This is the responsibility of UNIFIL, and we are not concerned in providing the Israeli aggressor with any service."

March 14 majority leader Saad Hariri: warned against the dangers of the repeated incidents in which rockets were fired to divert attention from the Israeli massacres perpetrated against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip to the Lebanese borders and the attempts of some parties to use the Lebanese territories as a means to invite bids to expand the

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war. Hariri called on the Lebanese people and authorities to be alert to prevent dragging Lebanon in confrontations that have nothing to do with Lebanon.

March 14 SYG Fares Souaid: March 14 forces denounce the repeated attempts to give Israel the justification it needs to renew its aggression over Lebanon, by insisting on using it as a platform to launch rockets contrary to the unanimous will of the Lebanese.

¶6. (SBU) As in 2006, many Lebanese are receiving recorded phone messages apparently from Israel warning against attacks from Lebanon. The message states, "Because of the rocket attacks on northern Israel, we warn you from cooperating and assisting the armed factions that carry out terrorist acts against the state of Israel, including the Palestinians, Al-Qaeda and Hizballah. We remind you of the results of this assistance, and what destruction it caused to Lebanon in 2006. State of Israel.

PROVIDING EQUIPMENT TO HELP THE LAF AND UNIFIL  
EXERCISE BETTER CONTROL IN THE SOUTH  
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¶7. (C) Comment and Action Request. We asked LAF Commander Kahwagi, during a January 10 meeting to discuss the first rocket attack, what equipment the USG might provide that would help the LAF better control the area of southern Lebanon to prevent future attacks. His response was UAVs, which the LAF already has requested, and counter-battery radar. The radar is likely too expensive and also raises QME issues, and so is not practical for the USG to provide to the LAF. It might be practical, though, for UNIFIL. Currently, UNIFIL has two radar units which we understand have limited capability to detect firing positions. It is worth exploring, in our view, asking UNIFIL to deploy more advanced radar that could detect firing positions. On UAVs, Embassy understands that there currently is a USG "policy hold" on the 12 UAVs the LAF has previously requested. To provide the LAF and UNIFIL with more capability to prevent rocket attacks, Embassy recommends:  
-- removing the hold on the 12 UAVs and taking steps to provide them to the LAF quickly;

-- urging UNIFIL to revisit the issue of operating UAVs;  
-- exploring a request to UNIFIL to deploy radar that could  
detect rocket launch sites. End Comment and Action Request.

GRANT